

CLASSIFICATION SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

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SUBJECT Decline in Gottwald's Influence;  
Purge of Frejka

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1. I think that Klement Gottwald has less power today than he has had at any time since he has occupied the position of President. Never has he been so isolated from the life of the country. In the past his influence was strongly felt in all political, economic, and cultural activities of Czechoslovakia. In the daily broadcasts from Prague, I no longer detect any indication of Gottwald's influence on the life of the citizen. Everything in Czechoslovakia seems to be guided by an impersonal hand; in my opinion, it is the USSR. Certainly it is not the hand of any current Czechoslovak leaders.
2. In past speeches, Prime Minister Zapotocky has constantly alluded to certain decisions having been made at the advice, suggestion, or order of Gottwald. His recent speeches have included no mention of the President except at the end, when he always makes some statement such as, "Long live our great leader Klement Gottwald!" Gottwald himself used to make many speeches; now he makes only a few.
3. Gottwald is not an orator, but his speeches were brilliant, well organized, and always closed with a note of optimism. In his 1952 New Year's Day speech, however, he spoke in a low voice which was weak and halting. The speech was poorly organized and without optimism. In the past, recordings of his speeches have usually been rebroadcast a number of times. The rebroadcasts of his New Year's speech, instead of being recorded, were read by various announcers and the contents slightly changed from the original version.

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4. [redacted] in August 1951, various Government officials who had recently spoken with Gottwald told me that he gave the appearance of a man who had been drinking too heavily. During the May Day Parade of 1951, [redacted] Gottwald seemed to be so weak that he could hardly stand on his feet to review the procession. This impression was confirmed by many [redacted] who had also seen Gottwald at the parade.
5. Ing Ludwig Frejka, who was recently deposed as economic advisor to President Gottwald, was considered, along with Dr Goldmann and Dr Jaromir Dolansky, to be the real economic brain of the Communist Party and the primary author of the Two Year and Five Year Plans. Until 1949 or 1950 he was Chief of the Economic Department of the Central Secretariat of the Communist Party. He was highly educated and extremely intelligent, of German-Jewish origin. Before the war he published a German Communist newspaper "Die Rote Fahne" in the Sudetenland. He served in the British Army during World War II using the name of Freund or Fruehauf. [redacted] the purge of Frejka was part of an attempt by the Soviets to eliminate all Jews from high posts in the Government. The only important official of Jewish origin remaining in the Czech government is the Minister of Justice.

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